

The Art of Mickey Pancakes

Okay, I know this is a silly topic to cover, but there are a lot of good tips here. These Mickey pancakes are a fun way to start the day, especially if both you and the kids are about to start the day at a Disney theme park. One of the most memorable -- and special -- parts of a Disney trip to a child is in the preparation; the anticipation just swells up inside them. And what better way to make the trip a memorable one than to surprise them with Mickey pancakes?

Okay, where to begin? Let's start with the utensils. There are two that are important. The first, obviously, is the spatula. I highly recommend a metal one, providing you're cooking on a surface that you won't mind scratching up. Metal spatulas are good because they can easily pry the pancake off of the cooking surface without ripping it to shreds. The other utensil is a regular teaspoon; not a measuring teaspoon and not a table spoon. It's important to control the small amounts of batter that will become the eyes and nose. Speaking of which . . .

I like to cook with a fairly thick batter; it's easy to control and produces nice thick pancakes (you also have to make less pancakes).

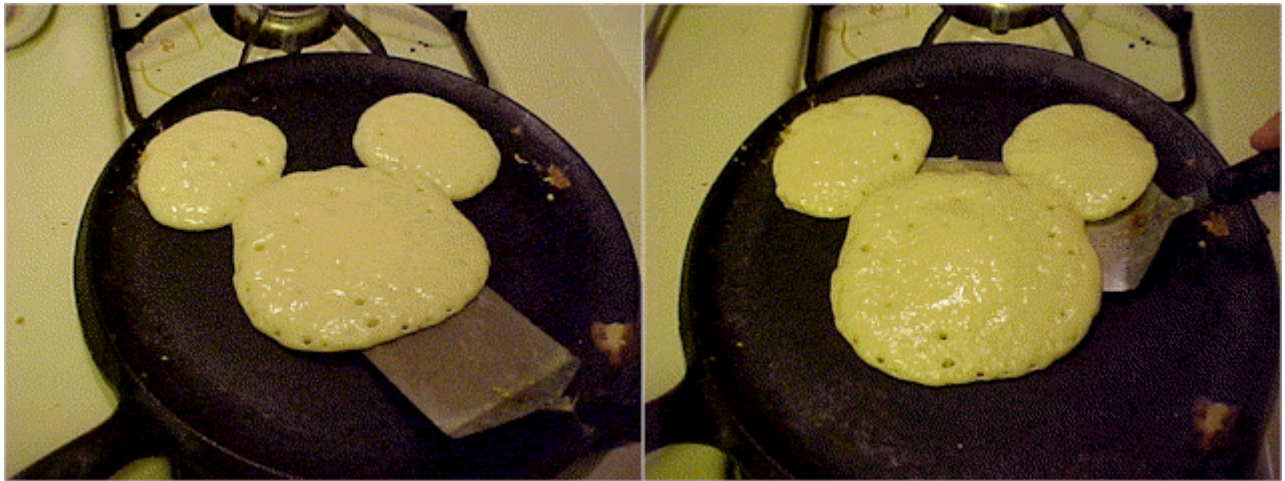


Using your teaspoon, slowly pour a small amount of batter onto the griddle, drawing a very short line. The batter should then expand into an oval shape. This will be the nose. Repeat the process two more times for the eyes. You will most likely have to practice "drawing", but once you get the feel of the batter and know how far it will expand, it should be easy for you. An important thing to remember is to pour continuously for each shape. If you pause, there's a good chance that it will be noticeable later on.

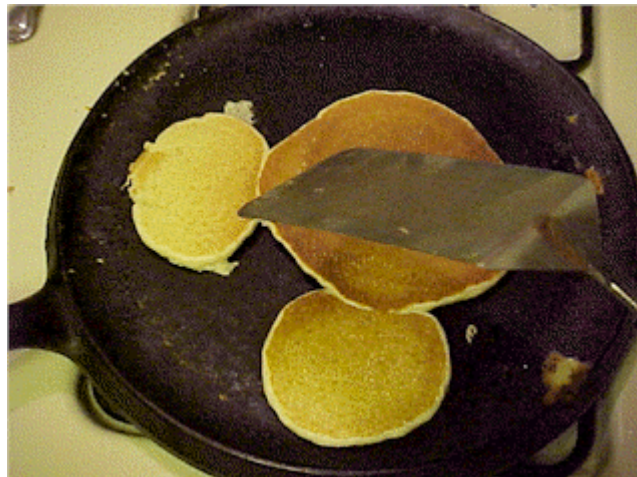
After the eyes and nose have formed a bottom crust, use your spatula to loosen them and reposition them on your griddle. Placing them in the middle of the lower half of the griddle will give you room for the ears up above.



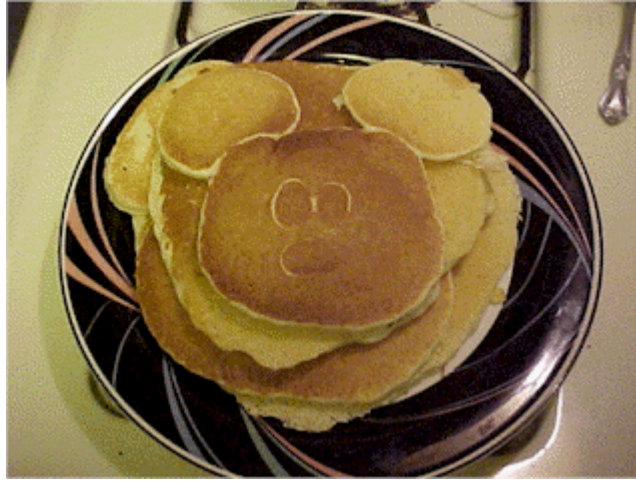
After they are positioned just right, pour a large amount of batter over the eyes and nose, creating a circle. This should be done no more than a minute after pouring the eyes and nose. Otherwise you will end up with a golden Mickey head with burned eyes and a burned nose. After the head has stopped expanding, pour more batter to create the ears; they should be formed just like the eyes and nose were, just with more batter.



Allow a bottom crust to form and then loosen the entire pancake with the spatula. Unless you have a jumbo sized spatula, the best place from which to flip the pancake is from the upper head and lower ears, supporting all three. Once you're ready . . .



. . . flip! This part WILL take some practice. It is also a good idea to keep the pancakes small so that they are easier to flip. But, if you insist on making large ones, it might be smart to create the head and ears separately. Later, you can assemble them on the plate.



When the other side has cooked, serve it up and enjoy!